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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/677,576	10/02/2003	Nancy C. Kerrigan	079793.00004	9299
7590	01/12/2005		EXAMINER	
Todd S. Parkhurst Holland & Knight LLC 30th Floor 131 South Dearborn St. Chicago, IL 60603			ALIMENTI, SUSAN C	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3644	
DATE MAILED: 01/12/2005				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>	
	10/677,576	KERRIGAN, NANCY C.	
	<b>Examiner</b>	<b>Art Unit</b>	
	Susan C. Alimenti	3644	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM  
 THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02 October 2004.  
 2a) This action is FINAL.                    2b) This action is non-final.  
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) Claim(s) 1-13 is/are pending in the application.  
 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.  
 5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.  
 6) Claim(s) 1-13 is/are rejected.  
 7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.  
 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.  
 10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
     Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
     Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).  
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
 a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:  
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)                     |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____  |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
|  | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                    |

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102*

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1, 2, and 4-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Raymond (US 3,173,398).

Raymond discloses a pet rest and recreation apparatus comprising an elevated rest space 18, steps 16 leading to the rest space 18 and defining a storage area beneath it. Rest space 18 comprises a mattress pad 31 for the animal's comfort, and is surrounded by side 25-27 wherein each side has a handle or aperture therein.

In the alternative, if one were to contend that element 16 and its ribbed nature is not considered steps, the examiner takes Official Notice that structure 16 is equivalent in the art to steps and would be an obvious replacement, not in any way changing the scope of the invention.

Art Unit: 3644

4. Claims 1-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Northrop et al. (US 5,964,189).

Northrop et al. (Northrop) discloses a pet rest and recreation apparatus comprising an elevated rest space 48 disposed atop a storage area 44, and a ramp 80 for access to the rest space 48. While Northrop does not positively disclose stairs, a ramp and stairs are well-known equivalent structures in the art. The examiner takes Official Notice that it would have been obvious to replace Northrop's carpeted ramp 80 with carpeted stairs since both are known for their equivalent use, and the selection of these would be within the level of ordinary skill in the art.

Regarding claims 3 and 8, storage area 44 is considered to be a closet.

Regarding claims 7, 12 and 13, the ramp 18 and rest space 48 are covered in carpet.

Northrop, col.8, lns.10-11, 51-53.

Regarding claims 4 and 9, rest space 48 is surrounded by sides 114 and 43, and the edge of side 43 is considered to be a handle.

Regarding claims 6, 11, and 13, Northrop teaches that rest space 48 may be covered with "other soft flooring material," this is considered to comprise a pet mattresses. Northrop, col.7, lns.62-65. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to place a mattress pad on space 48 since such an addition is well-known in the art in order to provide extra comfort to the pet, and such a modification would not alter the scope of the invention.

Regarding claim 10, the area under ramp or stairs 80 is defined as a storage space.

***Conclusion***

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Susan C. Alimenti whose telephone number is 703-306-0360. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Teri Luu can be reached on 703-305-7421. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

6. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

SCA



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